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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 136002

FOR AMBASSADOR BOWDLER

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO MANAGUA PANAMA SAN JOSE
SAN SALVADOR TEGUCIGALPA BELIZE FROM GUATEMALA 24 JUN 74:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 3407

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, GT
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT-ELECT LAUGERUD ANNOUNCES HIS CABINET

REF: GUATEMALA 3395

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT-ELECT LAUGERUD ANNOUNCED SELECTION
OF NEW CABINET ON JUNE 24. HE HAS APPOINTED CLOSE FRIENDS
TO KEY DEFENSE AND GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, AND TECHNICALLY
COMPETENT, RESPECTED MEN TO MOST OTHER POSITIONS. CABINET
HAS BASICALLY CONSERVATIVE CAST, BUT SEVERAL KEY
MINISTERS HAVE EVIDENCED AWARENESS OF NEED FOR SOME REFORMS.
LAUGERUD HAS SUCCESSFULLY RESISTED PRESSURES TO APPOINT
POLITICAL HACKS, AND FINAL CHOICES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN
HIS OWN. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT-ELECT GENERAL KJELL LAUGERUD ANNOUNCED
SELECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET AT A
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JUNE 24 PRESS CONFERENCE:

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FOREIGN RELATIONS: ADOLFO MOLINA ORANTES, 59,
NOTED INTERNATIONAL LAWYER, SERVED BRIEFLY AS FOREIGN
MINISTER IN 1958, WIDE EXPERIENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SERIOUS, HARD-WORKING, FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS U.S.

GOVERNMENT: GENERAL LEONEL VASSAUX, 48, MINISTER
OF DEFENSE FOR 2 YEARS IN ARANA ADMINISTRATION. CLOSE
FRIEND OF LAUGERUD, WHO SERVED AS HIS CHIEF OF STAFF.

DEFENSE: GENERAL FAUSTO RUBIO, 45, PRESENT MINISTER
OF DEFENSE WHO CONTINUES IN SAME POSITION. CLOSE FRIEND
OF LAUGERUD. SERVED AS LAUGERUD'S CHIEF OF STAFF WHEN
HE WAS DEFENSE MINISTER.

FINANCE: JORGE LAMPORT, 46, INCUMBENT FINANCE
MINISTER, PROBABLY THE MOST COMPETENT MAN IN ARANA
CABINET.

ECONOMY: EDUARDO PALOMO, 43, PRESENTLY VICE
PRESIDENT OF BANK OF GUATEMALA, FORMER VICE MINISTER
OF ECONOMY, HIGHLY COMPETENT, RESPECTED FOR TECHNICAL
ABILITY.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS: GUSTAVO ANZUETO,
48, ANOTHER CARRY-OVER FROM PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.
MLN MAEMBER, HAS GOOD CREDENTIALS FOR THE JOB BUT
SOME QUESTION OF HIS HONESTY. HAS BEEN NEGATIVE
FACTOR FOR U.S. BUSINESS INTERESTS.

AGRICULTURE: ROBERTO ZACHRISSON, MEDICAL DOCTOR
AND WEALTHY FARMER, ACTIVE IN AGRICULTURAL CIRCLES.
HAS BEEN HIGH OFFICIAL IN AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH: DR. JULIO CASTILLO SINIBALDI, MEMBER
OF CASTILLO BREWERY FAMILY. GENERALLY RESPECTED. HAS
SERVED AS CHIEF OF SURGERY AT MILITARY HOSPITAL.

EDUATION: GUILLERMO PUTZEYS, 38, DEAN OF HUMANITIES
AT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, MODERATE, TALENTED ADMINISTRATOR.
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LABOR: DANIEL CORZO DE LA ROCA, WAS RUMORED TO HAVE
BEEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S CANDIDATE FOR MINISTER
OF LABOR IN 1970.
POWERFUL CTF UNION LEADER MORALES CRUBAZ DESCRIBED CORZO AS
INDEPENDENT THINKER AND EXPRESSED GUARDED OPTIMISM RE
APPOINTMENT.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS: ROBERTO GIRON LEMUS, EDITOR OF
LA NACION. INTELLIGENT, UNOFFICIAL COLLABORATOR
IN ARANA GOVERNMENT, DRAFTED A NUMBER OF ARANA'S SPEECHES.
REPORTEDLY SUPPORTS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REFORM.
HAS LEFTIST BACKGROUND, SERVED IN ARREVALO AND ARBENZ
GOVERNMENTS.

2. COMMENT: CABINET COMPRISED LARGELY OF TECHNICALLY
COMPETENT, RESPECTED, CONSERVATIVELY ORIENTED MEN.
LAUGERUD HAS APPOINTED CLOSE FRIENDS TO KEY DEFENSE AND
GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, WHICH WILL STRENGTHEN HIS POSITION
VIS-A-VIS HIS VICE PRESIDENT, MARIO SANDOVAL, AND THE FAR
RIGHT. MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, EDUCATION, ECONOMY, AND
FINANCE, ARE ALL TOP NOTCH. LATTER TWO ARE WELL
AWARE OF NEED FOR FISCAL REFORM. MINISTERS OF
AGRICULTURE AND PUBLIC HEALTH ARE RELATIVELY UNKNOWN
TO US BUT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED BECAUSE
LAUGERUD HAS CONFIDENCE IN THEM. PRESIDENT-ELECT
HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN KEEPING POLITICAL HACKS OUT OF
THE TOP JOBS, AND WE NOTE THAT PRESIDENT ARANA'S SON,
ROBERTO, DID NOT GET A CABINET POSITION AS WAS RUMORED.
ONLY MEMBER OF CABINET WITH WHOM WE HAVE HAD BAD
EXPERIENCE IS ANZUETO.

3. ALTHOUGH, AS NOTED REFTEL, LAUGERUD STILL FACES
PROBLEMS IN STAFFING SECONDARY-LEVEL POSITIONS, IT
CERTAINLY APPEARS THAT HIS CABINET-LEVEL SELECTIONS
HAVE PUT HIM IN ABOUT AS GOOD A POSITION AS COULD BE
HOPED FOR TO EFFECT THE MODEST SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
REFORMS HE HAS ESPOUSED. END COMMENT. MELOY UNQUOTE
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